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ABSTRACT

Designed for students enrolled in an internship seminar at LaGuardia Community College (New York), this workbook helps students assess their skills and plan for their career. Chapter I discusses definitions of success, planning one's career journey by establishing a series of career goals and gathering information, and the purpose of the seminar. Chapters II and III provide information, guidance, and activities to help students assess their personal and work-related values, their skills and strengths, and their weaknesses. Chapter IV stresses the importance of understanding as much as possible about a chosen career field, focusing on such considerations as job responsibilities, requirements for entry and advancement, earning potential, job outlook, job path, and career planning. This chapter also assigns a term project to prepare a Future Resume, which lists the steps the student might take to achieve his/her career goal in the next 10 years. Chapter V discusses educational options within the context of the student's career journey. In chapter VI, methods for coping with financial needs are reviewed. Chapter VII offers concluding words of advice. (LAL)

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CAREER RESEARCH

LaGuardia Community College
Division of Cooperative Education

Second Internship Seminar

JC 860 360

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It has often been said that before you can figure out how to get somewhere, you have to know where you want to go. Finding the road to success first requires that you define what success means to you.

The word success has different meanings for each one of us. For some, it means having a good job, getting married, a car, a house, two kids and a dog. For others, success means just being happy. The definition of success we each have, has been influenced by society, our family and friends, and the values in which we believe. At different stages of our lives, this definition often changes. But no matter what your definition, success reflects the achievement of a goal.

In our lives there are many types of goals which we set. Some are personal goals like improving your health, winning a race or raising a family. Others are career goals such as getting a degree, earning a good salary or becoming president of a company. Goals are both short termed and long termed. Though your short term goal may be to find a job in your field, your long term goal may be to someday have your own business. How successful you feel by achieving a particular goal usually depends on how important the goal is to you.

Achieving some of the goals in your life often affects the pursuit of other goals you may have. For example, one of your goals may be to live in another part of the world. But moving there may make it difficult for you to find work in your career field, which is another one of your goals. In situations like this, people often decide which goal is more important to them and then adjust their goals. Achieving success in your career goals is very much like this situation.

The way you define success in your career will affect your achievement of success in your personal life. For example, your career will affect where you live, your lifestyle, how much leisure time you have, the things you can afford to buy, and the types of pressures you will have to deal with. Your career will be one of the most influential factors in your life.

A job is part of a career. A career may include many jobs. But a career does not only include jobs. It also includes your education, the skills you develop, the contacts you make with people in your profession, and understanding what it means to be a professional in your field. A successful career is achieved by being successful in all of these areas. A successful life is achieved by getting where you wanted to go.

YOUR CAREER JOURNEY

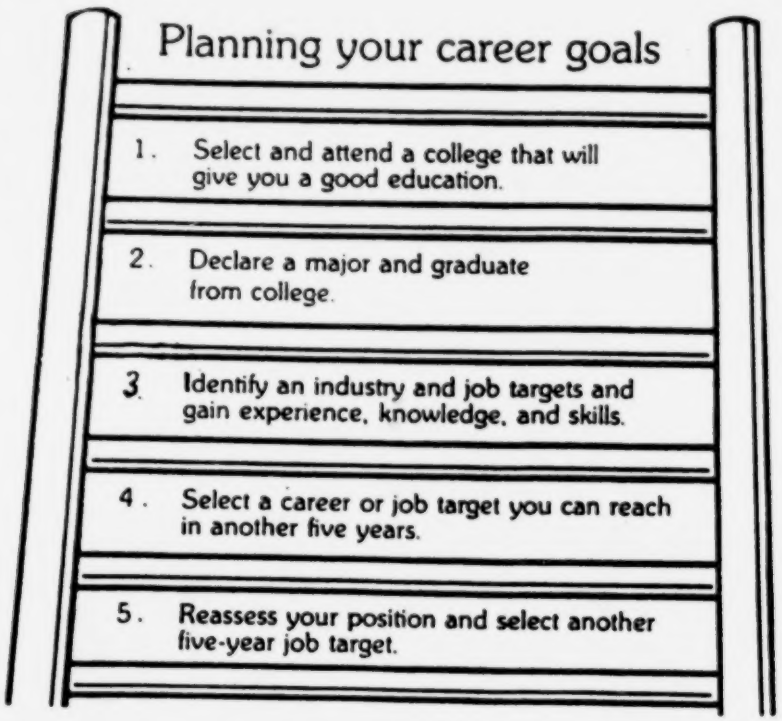
In planning your career journey, there are many points to remember. First there is no perfect journey. We all face the same challenges, such as establishing career goals, obtaining a job offer, and dealing with undesirable or unpleasant aspects of a job (such as working for a poor manager, dealing with office politics, encountering prejudice on the job, and so forth).

Second, you must learn to be proactive rather than reactive. This means you must anticipate your next move, rather than depend on circumstances to dictate it. If you cannot adjust to or change things in your work environment, you must develop a plan to move your career forward. Often, this involves changing companies.

Career paths have undergone major changes in the past few years. The traditional approach usually involved an individual's working for himself or staying with one employer until retirement. Today, however, American society and the world of work are constantly changing. Employment opportunities are in a continuous state of transition. Minority groups are experiencing more opportunities to move into management. More day-care centers enable women with children to hold full-time jobs. A greater number of adults are returning to school to learn new skills, keep up with changing technology, and enhance their promotability.

Finally, the idea of job security is a thing of the past. More than ever, companies are acquiring other companies, merging, or going out of business. This signals layoffs, transfers, and terminations, giving rise to the contemporary career path.

You should plan your career journey by establishing a series of goals throughout your life. Career goals should be two to ten years in scope and should be reviewed regularly. One example is illustrated as follows:


Planning your career goals
1. Select and attend a college that will give you a good education.
2. Declare a major and graduate from college.
3. Identify an industry and job targets and gain experience, knowledge, and skills.
4. Select a career or job target you can reach in another five years.
5. Reassess your position and select another five-year job target.

HOW DO YOU GET THERE? - PLANNING THE ROAD

Every career field has different requirements for achieving success. Some require high levels of education and strong technical skills while others are more dependent on one's personality. As mentioned above, a career includes your jobs and education, the skills you develop, the contacts you make with people in your profession and understanding what it means to be a professional in your field. How far you pursue each of these areas affects how far you can go in your career. For example, though an Associate degree may be all you need to get an entry level job in your field, will it be enough to help your career advance?

The road to achieving success in these areas is often left to chance. People hope they will choose the right major, meet the right people, and say the right things during an interview. Hope is not enough. Achieving your personal and career goals requires planning and hard work.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Throughout our lives we are bombarded with opinions as to how we can achieve our life goals. Parents, relatives, teachers, counselors, friends, and the media all give us their opinions on how to achieve success. Their opinions, like our own, are usually based on their experiences and on information that they have come to believe is true. By blindly accepting opinions, you run the risk of being misled. The information you use to

plan a career should result from careful research rather than from a collection of opinions.

CAREER RESEARCH - OBJECTIVE OF THE SEMINAR

The purpose of this seminar is to help you research your career field. Through the readings, assignments and class discussions, you will gather information which will help you plan a possible path for your career.

CHAPTER II

SELF ASSESSMENT: PART I

Think about how much time you'll be investing in a career. On the average you'll be working 40 hours a week, 50 weeks a year - that's 2,000 hours a year. If you work 10 years it's 20,000 - 15 years it's 30,000 hours. Doesn't it seem worthwhile to spend some time determining which career you are best suited for, before making a 2,000 hour commitment?

Career planning is a process through which you acquire knowledge about yourself-your interests, values, skills and needs. Then you use this self-knowledge to make career plans and set goals. Careful career planning and the selection of the most appropriate profession can ensure satisfaction and high achievement during your career. It will also provide excellent preparation for your job search campaign and improve your qualities as a candidate.

Self-assessment is a vital part of the career planning process. The more knowledge you have about yourself, the more likely you are to make appropriate career choices and decisions. To begin gathering this information, you must take a realistic inventory of your skills, strengths, interests, and even your weaknesses. Self-assessment involves determining what you like best, what is important to you and what you value in your personal and work environments.

PERSONAL AND WORK-RELATED VALUES

Consider the following questions:

1. What important needs and values do you want satisfied by a career?
2. What is your preferred lifestyle?
3. Assuming that all of your values will not be realized in your chosen career, which are you willing to compromise?
4. Which of your needs and values indicate that the career you have chosen is right for you?

In order to answer these questions, you must first define your values and determine which ones may or may not be realized in your career. In your personal life, what is most important to you; success, family, friends, good health, or perhaps a lot of leisure time?

In your work, what is most important - a good salary, a friendly work environment, job security or perhaps a flexible schedule?

These are just a few values to consider when you begin the self-assessment process. Only you can determine which of your needs and wants are most important.

Let's take a closer look at values.

Values are the principles that guide our behavior.

Usually when people refer to values, they are talking about the principles that are most important to each person-their value system. Depending on your culture and your experiences, you each have a particular value system. Values are learned and values change. What may have been your parents' values may be different from yours. Values change based on our experiences, desires, beliefs, and what is happening around us.

Values can be classified. Some of our values are cultural, others are personal; some are considered traditional while others are emergent (that is, changing). While the values listed as examples may not be yours, they do belong to some people.

Cultural Values

1. Women should not work but take care of their families instead.

2. Men and women are equal partners. They share all family responsibilities.

Personal Values

1. Owning fancy clothes, knowing the latest dances and slang terminology is important so that I can be in style.

2. Engaging in leisure activities is important.

Traditional Values	Emergent Values
1. One should sacrifice today, be frugal and save for tomorrow.	1. People should enjoy themselves regardless of what they have to sacrifice.
2. People should work hard in the present to achieve success in the future.	2. It is possible to work and raise children at the same time.

Understanding your interests, abilities/skills, and values requires a willingness to explore and engage in exercises that enhance your awareness of yourself.

When you know more about yourself, you will be able to return to the steps in the decision-making process and evaluate your present choice of a career. You may find that you are pleased with your decisions; You may find that you want to change your mind; You may find that you want to explore options that you have not considered before.

ACTIVITIES

The following activities are intended to assist you in utilizing an understanding of your values in planning your career. Your instructor will tell you which activities to do.

ACTIVITY 1

A SELF EVALUATION OF WORK VALUES

Rating Satisfactions from Work

The following list describes a wide variety of satisfactions that people obtain from their jobs. Look at the definitions of these various satisfactions and rate the degree of importance that you would assign to each for yourself, using the scale below:

3 -- if it is very important to you in your career/job
2 -- if it is reasonably important
1 -- if it is unimportant or undesirable

____ PHYSICAL: Do work which makes physical demands in which I can use coordination and physical skills

____ UNIQUENESS: Feel that the work that I do is unique, novel, different from others in some way.

____ STATUS: Have a position which carries respect with my friends, family and community

____ HIGH INCOME POSSIBILITIES: Work which can lead to substantial earnings or profit enabling me to purchase essential items and the luxuries of life I desire

____ TIME FREEDOM: Be free to plan and manage my own time schedule in work; be able to set my own hours

____ EXPERTISE: Be respected and sought after for my knowledge & skill in a given area.

____ RELATIONSHIPS: Develop close friendships with my co-workers and other people I meet in the course of my work activities

____ DECISIONMAKING: Have the power to decide policies, agendas, courses of action, etc.

____ LOCATION: Live in a place which is conducive to my life style and in which I can do many of the activities I enjoy

____ MORAL/SPIRITUAL: Have a sense that my work is important to and in accord with a set of standards I believe in

____ FUN: Work in a situation in which I am free to be spontaneous, playful, humorous, exuberant

____ INTELLECTUAL STATUS: Be recognized as a person with high intellectual ability; one who is an authority in a given area of knowledge.

____ **INTEGRATION:** Be able to integrate my working life with my personal life, involving my family or close friends

____ **RESPONSIBILITY:** Be responsible for the planning and implementation of many tasks and projects as well as for the people involved

____ **SECURITY:** Be able to depend on keeping my job and making enough money

____ **BE NEEDED:** Feel that what I do is necessary for the survival or welfare of others

____ **HELP SOCIETY:** Make a contribution for the betterment of the world I live in

____ **PRESSURE:** Have a job which involves working against time deadlines and or where others critique the quality of my work

____ **CONTACT WITH PEOPLE:** Day to day contact and dealing with the public

____ **AUTHORITY:** Have control of others' work activities and be able to partially affect their destinies

____ **WORK ALONE:** Work by myself on projects and tasks

____ **PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:** Engage in work which offers me opportunity to grow as a person

____ **CREATIVITY:** Create new programs, systems; formulate new ideas; develop original structures & procedures not dependent on following another's format

____ **VARIETY:** Do a number of different tasks. Have the setting and content of my work responsibilities change frequently

____ **LEARNING:** Be able to continually learn new skills and acquire new knowledge and understanding

____ **UNDEMANDING:** Have work duties which demand very little energy or involvement

____ **INFLUENCE:** Be able to change and influence other's attitudes or opinions

____ **SUPERVISION:** Be directly responsible for work which is done and produced by others under my supervision

____ **BEAUTY:** Have a job which involves the aesthetic appreciation of study of things, ideas, or people

____ **ARTISTIC:** Be involved in creative works of art, music, literature, drama, decorating or other art forms

____ **ORDERLINESS OF ENVIRONMENT:** Work in a consistently ordered environment, where everything has its place and things are not changed often

____ **WORK WITH OTHERS:** Be a member of a working team. Work with others in a group toward common goals

____ **PREDICTABILITY:** Have a stable and relatively unchanging work routine and job duties

____ **PRODUCTIVE:** Produce tangibles, things which I can see and touch

____ **JOB TRANQUILITY:** To avoid pressures and the "rat race"

____ **COMPETITION:** Pit my abilities against those of others in situations which test my competencies and in which there are win or lose outcomes

____ **PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT:** Work is a place which is pleasing to me aesthetically; is beautiful to me

____ **COMMUNITY:** Work at a job in which I can get involved in community affairs

____ **INDEPENDENCE:** Be able to direct and control the course of my work, determining its nature without a great deal of direction from others

____ **RECOGNITION:** Be visibly and publicly appreciated and given credit for the quality of my work

____ **ADVANCEMENT:** Opportunity to work hard and move ahead in my organization

____ **HELPING OTHERS:** Provide a service to and assist others as individuals or as groups

____ **AFFILIATION:** Be recognized as being associated with a particular organization

____ **RISK-TAKING:** Have work which requires me to take risks and rise to challenges frequently

____ **EXERCISE COMPETENCE:** An opportunity to involve myself in those areas in which I feel I have talents above the average person

____ **WORK ON FRONTIERS OF KNOWLEDGE:** Be involved in hard science of human research; work in a company which is considered one of the best in the business and strive for advances

____ **CREATIVE EXPRESSION:** Opportunity to express my ideas, reactions and observations about my job and how I might improve it verbally or in writing

____ **PROBLEM SOLVING:** A position which provides challenging problems to solve and avoids continual routine

IN THE COLUMNS BELOW, list the values you coded as 3, Very Important; and 1, Unimportant. Do you notice any PATTERNS? Do they fall into groupings? Would you have rated them differently 10 years ago? 5 years ago? 1 year ago?

*	O	P	3 Very Important in my Career Planning	1 Unimportant or Undesirable

Look over the VALUES you listed as Very Important to you in your career planning. In the columns to the left: Under P, check those which you have in your Present job; Under O, check those which you can include in your life Outside of work.

Now choose the 5 VALUES Most Important to you in your career planning and code them with a star (*). List them on the next page, describing what they mean to you and why you chose them. If they fall naturally into certain groups, list them in that manner.

AN EVALUATION OF MY WORK VALUES

The five VALUES or SATISFACTIONS I most want to include in my work:

1. _____

_____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

_____

4. _____

_____

_____

_____

5. _____

_____

_____

_____

QUESTIONS: Why are these values important to me? What do I need to do to incorporate them into my present life? Into my present job? Into my personal life?

Activity 2

Job-Related Values

Look at this list of job-related values. Think of each one in terms of your overall career objectives. Using this list:

a. Circle the five career values you consider most important to you.

b. Cross our the five which are least important to you.

c. Add others which are not on the list.

---

the chance to advance

having authority (responsibility)

meeting challenges

working for something you believe in

enjoyable colleagues

ease (freedom from worry)

enjoyable work tasks

being an expert

independence on the job

learning from the job

location of the work place

money earned

having time for personal life

power

prestige

recognition from superiors, society, peers

security (stability) of employment

chance to make an impact

clear expectations and procedure

d. Describe in your own words what you want most in your Life/Career.

e. If forced to compromise any of the things you want, what would you give up?

f. What would you be most reluctant to give up?

g. What type of work or activities do you think might lead to the important career goals which include your most treasured values?

Activity 3

CAREER VALUES CHECKLIST

Think about the conditions under which you would like to work every day, the kind of work you would like to do, and the long-range pattern you would like your career to take.

Check off the values that seem most important to you. In the blanks at the end of the list write down others that are part of your ideal career picture.

I value ...

Doing interesting work ____
Working with people ____
Earning a lot of money ____
Having a chance to advance ____
Having good working conditions ____
Having convenient hours ____
Having a chance to travel ____
Being told what to do ____
Working independently, on my own ____
Working with things ____
Working with ideas ____
Being a member of a group ____
Expressing my personal beliefs ____
Meeting new people ____
Doing a variety of tasks ____
Using a special skill ____
Competing with others ____
Being honest and ethical ____
Being well liked ____
Keeping busy ____

Having prestige ____
Having job security ____
Working slowly ____
Being creative ____
Expressing social concern ____
Exercising leadership ____
Using my brains ____
Becoming well known ____
Not having responsibility ____
Making important decisions ____
Influencing people ____
Having free time ____
Learning new things ____
Doing work that is easy ____
Doing work that is challenging ____
Doing routine work ____
Working for myself ____

Now that you have a list of the many values that you want to find in a career, it is important that you know the values that are <u>most</u> important to you. Next to the MOST important value, place a 1. Next to the SECOND most important value, write a 2. And, next to the THIRD most important value, place a 3.

CHAPTER III

SELF-ASSESSMENT: PART II

Skills and Strengths

A skill is an ability to do something. Your skills are demonstrated in almost everything you do. They can be natural abilities, or abilities gained through education or work experience. Most skills are transferable, that is, skills, which may be used in more than one activity. By identifying your skills, you gain more information about yourself and your abilities and then you can convey this information to a prospective employer during an interview.

One way to identify what skills you have, or would like to acquire, is to take a skills inventory.

Begin by making a list of the skills and strengths you have, indicating the situations in which you have demonstrated them, and the degree of interest you have in using them. For each, you should be able to provide at least one or two incidents where you successfully demonstrated the skill. Think carefully before deciding how important it is for you to use each in your career. It is perfectly legitimate to have a skill which you will use only in leisure hours. The following are some skills/strengths you should consider.

Mathematical

- Working with numbers
- Ability to understand and use equations and theoretical formulae

Communication (ability to express ideas in a clear, concise, grammatically correct manner.

- Oral presentations to groups
- One-on-one communication
- Written communications

Details (follow-through skills)

- Attention to minute details during analysis of a problem
- Accurate performance of routine functions

Interpersonal

- Listening (hearing and understanding, patience)
- Persuasion (convincing others to approve and act upon your ideas)
- Cooperation (working as part of a team)
- Teaching (ability to provide effective instruction)
- Leadership
- Diplomacy

Creativity

- Willingness to experiment with new methods
- Ability to develop new ideas providing solutions to existing problems

Research (ability to collect pertinent data)

- Use of written material as a source
- Ability to obtain information through interviewing

Include on your list any other skills/strengths, such as technical skills, which you feel are important.

Details

- Complete projects on time
- Able to work well under stress and still improvise
- Expert at getting things done

Mathematical

- Financial planning and management
- Doing cost analysis
- Developing a budget
- Bookkeeping - accounting

Interpersonal

- Develop support of colleagues, supervisors, etc.
- Promoting - selling of tangibles/intangibles

Leadership

- Initiating
- Organizing your time - ability to be self-directed (self-directed at work)
- Planning for and effecting change
- Take risks - make hard decisions
- Leading, guiding, inspiring, motivating

Managing Skills

- Planning
- Policy making
- Prioritizing tasks
- Organizing (people, things)
- Program development
- Delegating/supervising

Communicating

- Reading
- Summarizing - reporting

Research - Evaluating Skills

- Analyzing - classifying - organizing
- Problem-solving
- Decision-making

Determining Your Weaknesses

No one is perfect; we all have some areas in which we are deficient. The preceding section points out the importance of identifying your skills and strengths. It is just as vital to the self-assessment process that you learn to recognize your weaknesses. After determining what your weaknesses are, you must decide what you can do to improve them or how you can use them as factors when setting career goals. The first step is to recognize such weaknesses as:

Procrastination: The tendency to put off undesirable projects.

Communication deficiencies: Are your speech/writing patterns poor? Do you tend to use a lot of slang? Is it difficult to put your thoughts into words? Are you verbose, or too short in your explanations?

Quick Temper: Do you respond in a quick, emotional manner to an adverse situation? Do you accept criticism calmly?

The above are some of the areas which would require that you re-educate, re-train yourself to eliminate or control the deficiency. No matter what career field you choose, these qualities would make you a poor candidate during the interviewing process and will create problems for you during your career.

There are other weaknesses that may in some circumstances merely indicate that you should choose one career path over another.

If you find it <u>difficult to work with others,</u> then you might consider only those career paths where team work is not essential and the job generally requires that one person develop, implement and maintain each project.

An <u>inability to deal with a non-structured environment</u> would indicate the need for a field that contains highly structured procedures; where all items fit into specific categories.

If you <u>cannot work under pressure,</u> avoid careers and industries that continually have peak and slump periods. In the peak periods you would be required to produce at an extremely high level in short time spans.

SUMMARY

Career planning and self-assessment are lifetime, on-going processes. As you progress in your life and career you will need to continually re-evaluate and update your values, skills, and needs as well as career goals, paths and objectives.

Hopefully, the information and questions provided here will help you think about who you are, where you are going, and how you are going to get there. However, the responsibility for taking charge of your life and career planning is yours. You must set realistic goals that are attainable and assess what is needed to achieve those goals.

It involves a considerable investment of your time and effort, but the payoff in terms of happiness and job satisfaction make it well worth the effort.

ACTIVITIES

The following activities are intended to help you assess your skills. Your instructor will tell you which activities to do.

ACTIVITY 1

SKILLS CHECKLIST

1. Think about what you can do and have done. Refer to your Skills Checklist and look over the list of skills in each box. Check ✓ those which you possess and have used in some way. Add other skills you have which are not listed. Put a star (*) next to those skills which you enjoy using.

2. It is interesting and helpful to find out how others see your skills and abilities. Make a copy of this list and give it to others who know you -- your family, your co-workers, your friends. Ask them to check the skills which they think you possess. Ask them to put a star (*) next to those skills they think you are particularly good at.

   IN WHAT BOXES, OR CATEGORIES, ARE MOST OF YOUR SKILLS LOCATED?

   Which kinds of skills do you enjoy using the most? Which give you the most satisfaction? What kinds of things are you interested in doing?

3. Now, go through the list again. What are the skills you would like to improve...become better at? What are the skills you would like to acquire? To learn? Mark these in such a way that they stand out. (Underline, circle, red pencil...)

4. Talk to your friends, co-workers, family and others about different kinds of career fields, occupations and jobs in which your skills are valued.

* * *

WORKING WITH PEOPLE

HELPING/HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS

___ caring for others
___ being sensitive
___ empathizing
___ listening & understanding
___ counseling, guiding
___ communicating warmth
___ collaborating w/ others
___ team work
___ advocating, negotiating for others
___ motivating others
___ sharing
___ host or hostessing
___ creating pleasant environments

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

___ managing responsibility
___ delegating responsibility
___ organizing & coordinating others
___ planning, forecasting
___ designing & developing programs
___ establishing procedures, organizational structures
___ directing & supervising others
___ reviewing, evaluating
___ hiring, team building
___ implementing policies
___ developing the potential in people

INSTRUCTIONAL/EDUCATIONAL SKILLS

___ briefing, explaining
___ teaching, tutoring
___ advising, informing
___ training
___ leading, facilitating
___ creating learning environments
___ encouraging
___ enabling others to help themselves
___ empowering, training others
___ illustrating concepts with examples

COMMUNICATING/PUBLIC RELATIONS SKILLS

___ communicating
___ writing reports, letters, memos
___ conversing
___ speaking
___ editing
___ reading
___ translating, explaining
___ defining
___ summarizing
___ writing -- imaginative, promotional
___ public speaking
___ demonstrating
___ using humor
___ making radio and tv presentations
___ telling stories
___ performing in public

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

___ initiating
___ self-directing
___ managing time
___ persisting
___ confronting problem situations
___ planning & promoting change
___ active problem solving
___ taking risks
___ making hard decisions
___ leading others
___ motivating groups
___ inspiring others
___ chairing meetings
___ persuading
___ influencing others
___ selling
___ negotiating, bargaining
___ debating
___ promoting an idea/product
___ reconciling conflicts
___ mediating

WORKING WITH DATA

NUMERICAL/ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

___ financial bookkeeping reports
___ managing budgets/money
___ allocating resources
___ computing/calculating numbers
___ financial planning
___ statistical work
___ cost analysis
___ keeping deadlines
___ accepting responsibility
___ following through
___ organizing records/ classifying/filing, processing
___ getting things done
___ making arrangements, contacts
___ attention to details
___ implementing decisions
___ making decisions
___ coordinating
___ systematizing

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

___ gathering information
___ researching/surveying
___ clarifying problems
___ anticipating problems
___ organizing/classifying
___ analyzing/dissecting/ breaking into parts
___ diagnosing/finding the root of the problem
___ problem solving/trouble shooting
___ testing ideas
___ reviewing/critiquing/ evaluating

OBSERVATIONAL/ANALYTICAL SKILLS

___ sensing, feeling, listening, aware
___ observing, reflecting (people/data/things)
___ perceiving potential in others
___ learning quickly
___ reasoning, abstracting, using logic
___ assessing/appraising

WORKING WITH THINGS

PHYSICAL/MECHANICAL SKILLS

___ physical coordination
___ plant care, farming
___ animal care
___ travelling
___ navigating
___ physical stamina
___ outdoor work
___ camping
___ athletic
___ working/cleaning/tending
___ cooking
___ crafts
___ dancing
___ technical
___ mechanical reasoning
___ spacial perception
___ designing, shaping, composing
___ operating equipment
___ using tools
___ repairing
___ assembling/installing
___ building/construction
___ lifting, balancing, moving
___ precision work
___ producing

WORKING WITH PEOPLE, DATA & THINGS

CREATIVE/IMAGINATIVE/INNOVATIVE SKILLS

___ imagining/intuiting
___ improvising/inventive
___ innovating/creating ideas
___ experimenting
___ developing/formulating
___ synthesizing/integrating
___ predicting/showing foresight
___ adapting/improving
___ has insight
___ designing new programs/ materials
___ staging/directing productions
___ designing
___ sensitivity to beauty
___ expressive, verbally/ non-verbally
___ creating music/art/ photography/sculpture, etc.
___ visualizing, colors/ shapes/concepts
___ symbolizing, words/ images/concepts
___ writing, poetry/plays/ stories
___ acting

ACTIVITY 2

SUCCESS SKILLS

Into which categories do most of your skills fall?
Which categories of skills do you enjoy using the most?

On this form, list your categories of skills in order of enjoyment.
I.e., (1) most enjoyed; (2) second most enjoyed, etc.
Identify the specific skills you want to use and develop in each category. Use whatever wording you feel best expresses you and the skills you want to use.

1) FIRST CATEGORY OF SKILLS MOST ENJOYED: _____

SPECIFIC SKILLS I WANT TO USE AND DEVELOP: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2) SECOND CATEGORY OF SKILLS: _____

SPECIFIC SKILLS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3) THIRD CATEGORY OF SKILLS: _____

SPECIFIC SKILLS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4) FOURTH CATEGORY OF SKILLS: _____

SPECIFIC SKILLS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5) FIFTH CATEGORY OF SKILLS: _____

SPECIFIC SKILLS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6) SIXTH CATEGORY OF SKILLS: _____

SPECIFIC SKILLS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7) SEVENTH CATEGORY OF SKILLS: _____

SPECIFIC SKILLS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

MY CAREER SELF INFORMATION SHEET

A. MY MOST IMPORTANT OR MEANINGFUL ACHIEVEMENTS

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

B. MY SUCCESS SKILLS: THE SKILL CATEGORIES I MOST ENJOY USING

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

C. MY PERSONAL STRENGTHS: THOSE MOST DESCRIPTIVE OF ME

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

D. MY MOST IMPORTANT WORK VALUES

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

E. MY PRESENT NEED PRIORITIES

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

F. THE THINGS I MOST LIKE TO DO

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

G. 5 THINGS IN LIFE I MOST WANT TO ACCOMPLISH BEFORE I DIE

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

ACTIVITY 3

STRENGTHS AND ADJECTIVES

These may help you to define and expand your perceptions about the strengths you possess. The adjectives listed here describe qualities which are sought and valued in various working situations. Circle those you feel apply to you. Make a copy first so you can give this list to others, asking for their perceptions of you and your strengths.

active
conservative
daring
economical
frank
genuine
honest
industrious
just

independent
intellectual
intelligent
introspective
knowledgeable
literate
logical
methodical
precise

affectionate
amiable
broadminded
charming
cheerful
cooperative
friendly
generous
gentle

argues well
inquisitive
assertive
bold
businesslike
clever
competitive
controlling
dominant

loyal
masculine
materialistic
modest
natural
persistent
practical
realistic
robust

quiet
rational
teachable
unassuming
adaptable
artistic
complex
creative
expressive

helpful
goodnatured
idealistic
insightful
inspiring
kind
obliging
outgoing
peaceable

eager
energetic
enterprising
reserved
scholarly
serious
humorous
ingenious
inventive

self-effacing
sensible
stable
steadfast
steady
strong
unexcitable
vigorous
academic

emotional
flexible
idealistic
imaginative
independent
feminine
individualistic
informal
ingenious

persuasive
pleasant
strong-minded
thrifty
tough
sincere
sociable
socially skillful
sympathetic

opportunistic
optimistic
outgoing
performs well
pleasure living
progressive
purposeful
resourceful
risk-taker

analytical
calculating
controlling
critical
curious
cynical
experimental
factual
farsighted

intuitive
introspective
inventive
open-minded
original
quick to act
seeks change
spontaneous
zany

tactful
teachable
thoughtful
understanding
verbal
warm
adventurous
aggressive
ambitious

self-confident
seeks change
sharpwitted
shrewd
talkative
uninhibited
verbal
vigorous
witty

accurate
dependable
efficient
moderate
receptive

stylish
detail oriented
firm
obedient
sensitive

versatile
discreet
formal
orderly
democratic

deliberate
economical
meticulous
organized
determined

ACTIVITY 4

MY STRENGTHS

List the six personal strengths you feel are most descriptive of you. After each, identify what you are able to do because you possess that quality.

For example: I am informal; therefore I can meet people easily in many different circumstances and put others at ease.

1. I am _____

   Therefore I can _____

   _____

2. I am _____

   Therefore I can _____

   _____

3. I am _____

   Therefore I can _____

   _____

4. I am _____

   Therefore I can _____

   _____

5. I am _____

   Therefore I can _____

   _____

6. I am _____

   Therefore I can _____

   _____

CHAPTER IV

PLANNING YOUR CAREER

Your career, probably one of the single most influential factors in your life. The average person spends 70-80% of his or her waking hours on job-related activity. Directly or indirectly your career will determine:

-The people you deal with
-The amount of money you earn
-Your day-to-day activities
-Your leisure time
-The type of environment in which you work
-The area in which you live
-Your level of stress
-Your sense of pride and fulfillment

In view of this, it is important that you know and understand as much as possible about your career field. Information about topics such as job responsibility, earning potential, educational requirements for entry and advancement, and job outlook can be helpful to you in planning your career. Let's take a closer look at some of these topics.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Job responsibilities are the major activities and functions that an individual in a given field must perform. This includes day-to-day tasks, as well as more long-range activities that one engages in. Having a good understanding of job responsibilities can help you to know what will be expected of you when you enter your career field. It will also help you to know which skills should be developed in pursuing your career. Most importantly, it will help you to confirm

that the career choice you have made is the right one for you.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY AND ADVANCEMENT

There are many types of requirements both for entry and advancement in a given career field. A field may require a special level of education, prior field experience, a set of particular technical or personal skills or even a professional license. It is important that you be aware of the different types of requirements in your chosen area so that you may plan accordingly.

EARNING POTENTIAL

Every field has its own typical entry level, average and maximum salary that can be earned. The long range salary plan that you could earn in a field is called your earning potential . Each profession has different earning potentials. Some fields start out with low entry-level salaries but lead to high maximum salaries. Other fields start out with good starting salaries but have very small increases over time. You will want to know how salaries will change within a given position as your responsibilities change, or as you move from one position to another.

JOB OUTLOOK

The Job Outlook for a field provides information on what the growth in job opportunities is expected to be in the future. Usually, it also describes what geographic locations will offer the best job opportunities. This information is useful in that it gives you an idea of what the competition

for jobs in your field will be in the future. It also tells you where you might want to live in order to increase the chances for finding employment.

Job outlooks are based on what is currently happening in society and the economy and how it affects jobs in the future. Often, changes in government policies can affect the job opportunities for an entire profession. Many professions have regular patterns that job opportunities follow. These are often referred to as "trends". For example, as the number of babies born increases so does the need for more teachers. The number of engineering positions available in certain specialties varies according to the amount of money the government spends in certain areas.

The job opportunities in a field are also affected by the laws of supply and demand . The greater the supply of professionals in certain areas, the less the demand for more people. For example, during the early 1980's there were many more counselors available than there were jobs. Conversely, the less the supply of professionals in certain areas, the greater the demand for more people. For example, during the 1970's the demand for computer programmers was much greater than the supply of people available to work. The supply of people available to work in a field is affected by the number of people entering the field, the rate at which people change jobs, either due to career changes or promotions, and the rate that people retire, die, or simply leave

the field. The demand for people is affected by the rate at which a field is growing, government policies, economic conditions and the existing supply of available workers.

It is important to understand what factors affect the job outlook in your field. This knowledge is not only important as you are planning entry into your field but also in the future. Understanding the factors that affect the job outlook in your field helps you know the direction your field is heading in, the specialties that will be important for the future, and where you might want to move to find work.

THE NEXT STEP

An understanding of the job responsibilities, requirements for entry and advancement, earning potential and job outlook for your field provides you with an excellent foundation for planning your career. The next step is to take a long range look at your career plan.

JOB PATH

A job is only part of a career. A career is often made up of many jobs. Each job should act as a "stepping stone" toward your career goal. For example, before you can become a writer for a major city newspaper, you must first work in positions which help you develop the necessary experience. Included here might be jobs as a proofreader, an assistant editor or a writer for a college newspaper.

A job path is a plan of positions which will eventually

lead to a career goal. It is a series of positions, in which each position increases in level of responsibilities and requirements. For example, a job path for someone pursuing a career as a Systems Analyst might include positions such as Data Entry Clerk, Computer Operator/Customer Service, Computer Programmer, Senior Computer Programmer, and Systems Analyst.

Pursuing a job path sometimes requires changing employers. Often the size of a company, the number of available positions, or your specific interest make it impossible to move ahead. However, a job path does not always require that you change employers. A promotion or a job change within a company can be part of your career's job path.

Movement ahead on a job path is usually accompanied by an increased salary. In this regard, achieving your full earning potential requires moving ahead in your job path. Pursuing your job path often includes changes in your job title, but this may not always be the case. For instance, though a secretary's responsibilities and salary may increase, his or her job title may remain the same.

Understanding how positions lead to each other in a job path gives you the information you need to decide which positions will be helpful to your career, and which will not.

Another important benefit of understanding your job path is

that it helps you cope with chance. All of the things that happen in your career will not always be part of your plan. Opportunities pop up that are impossible to plan for. Understanding your job path helps you know whether or not taking advantage of these opportunities will work in your favor.

ADVANCING IN YOUR JOB PATH

There are many factors that affect one's ability to advance in a job path (often this is called job mobility). Besides performance on the job, factors such as education, personal and professional contacts, and one's ability to negotiate office politics play a major role in one's movement ahead.

PLANNING YOUR CAREER

In the preceding section, we have discussed a variety of topics which are important in planning your career. These topics are intended to serve as guides for you to gather information. How well you are able to plan your career depends on the quality of the information you obtain.

Most of the things that people know about their career choices are usually based on information they have received from friends, family, television and perhaps teachers or counselors. Though this information may be helpful, it is often incomplete or even inaccurate. Relying on what you have heard is true or on only one source of information can be misleading. Your information should be based on the careful research of a variety of sources. For example:

a) reviewing printed materials such as those found in the Career Resource Center, company annual reports, journals, and college bulletins;

b) utilizing services such as the computer terminal in the Career Resource Center, and

c) interviewing professionals in the field or fields of your choice. This includes employers,teachers, college administrators, selected professionals who are employed in your chosen field, and career counselors.

Planning your career is serious business. It should be done with the same care and attention you would give to any other important part of your life. Though gathering information about your career field does not guarantee your success, it can be a powerful tool for helping you to control what happens in your future.

HOW FAR HAVE YOU COME? - WORKING TOWARD YOUR GOAL

By this point in your life at LaGuardia, you have been exposed to a variety of topics designed to help you make progress toward your career goals. In your Coop Prep course, you took a close look at your life accomplishments, your skills, and your values. You learned how to prepare a resume and practiced interviewing. You also were introduced to the Career Resource Center and the various materials that are available to assist you in planning your career. All of these laid the foundation for you to begin planning your career and go out on your internships.

By this point in time, you have also completed your first internship and are currently on your second. You have begun

to gain experience in your chosen career and in doing so, have begun to make contacts. You may still be unsure of the specific career you want to pursue. The program at LaGuardia is designed to help those of you who know what you want to do and those of you who are unsure. Through your internships and seminars, you have the opportunity to explore different careers and consider a variety of choices.

The Coop Prep course taught you some of the skills you need to pursue your career. The internships can help you gain experience and make contacts in your career field. Properly used, both can help you in making progress toward your career goals.

THE FUTURE RESUME

In your Coop Prep course you were taught how to write a resume. The Coop Prep workbook defined a resume as:

> "...a summary of certain aspects of your life: Those past and present activities, accomplishments and skills that will enable a potential employer to determine whether you are the right person for a particular position."

If a resume is a summary of the past and present, what then is a "Future Resume"?

The Future Resume is a summary of what you plan to do in the future. Changing the definition of the resume slightly, the Future Resume is:

> "...a summary of certain aspects of your life: Those past, present and future activities, accomplishments and skills that will enable a potential employer

to determine whether you are the right person for a particular position."

The Future Resume can be a useful tool in helping you plan what you must do in order to progress toward your career goal. It requires that you not only list what you have done and are currently doing but also what you plan to do in the future to achieve your career goal.

Here is an example of a Future Resume of a student at LaGuardia whowants to become a psychologist.

John Williams
97-]8 Parker Ave.
Astoria, New York 11101
(718) 391-7653

EDUCATION

9/89 - 6/93	New York University - New York, NY Master of Arts - Psychology
9/85 - 6/89	Queens College - Flushing, NY Bachelor of Arts - Psychology
9/82 - 6/85	LaGuardia Community College - Long Island City, NY Associate of Arts - Liberal Arts, Social Science Honors: Dean's List

EXPERIENCE

7/93 - present	Psychologist - Creedmoor Psychiatric Center Queens Village, NY Responsibilities include intake, screening and assessment of clients, ongoing therapeutic services to individuals, families and groups, and psychometric testing.
4/89 - 6/93	Counselor - Queens Child Guidance Center Woodside, NY Position involved the intake and screening of clients requesting services and providing referrals to families with learning disabled children. Also assisted psychologist in testing clients.

1/84 - 3/89 **Intake Worker** - The Puerto Rican Forum New York, NY.
Responsibilities included completing intake forms on individuals seeking welfare, housing and/or employment, and conducting follow-up surveys of clients. Also assisted counselors in a variety of clerical tasks.

6/83 - 12/83 **Counselor's Aide** - The Door - New York, NY
Position involved assisting counselors in various aspects of their work. This included completing client applications, answering questions about the services available to the public, typing counselors' materials, and filing.

SKILLS

Fluent in Spanish
Knowledge of FORTRAN computer language

REFERENCES

Available upon request

PREPARING YOUR OWN FUTURE RESUME - TERM PROJECT

The term project for this seminar is to prepare a Future Resume, which lists the steps you might take to achieve your career goal ten years from now. Along with constructing a Future Resume you must answer the questions on the following Research Sheets. These questions refer to the research you have done to write your resume. The sheets should be attached to your Future Resume when you hand it in.

The Future Resume you construct should focus on the career you want to pursue. If you are undecided about the field you wish to go into, choose one which you would like to research for this assignment.

Your instructor will go into greater detail regarding the project in your next class.

RESEARCH SHEETS NAME: _____

A. **HEADING**

1) Why did you choose the location listed in the Heading of your Future Resume as the place where you plan on living 10 years from today?

LOCATION: _____

WHY? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2) If for personal reasons you do not plan on moving to parts of the country where the best job opportunities in your career field will exist, please list the areas of the U.S. where the best opportunities will be in the future.

_____

_____

_____

B. **OBJECTIVES**

1) Describe the nature of the work you will be performing in the career field you have chosen. Be specific and give details. What role does it play (in society and) within a company or ogranization. Be specific.

Career Field: _____

Nature of Work: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2) What factors attracted you to the career field you have chosen. List at least 5 factors and explain why each one is important to you.

CAREER FIELD: _____

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

e) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3) List 3 types of organizations or companies which would employ people in your career field. Provide the names of 3 companies or organizations for each type.

TYPE OF COMPANY	NAME OF COMPANIES
a) _____	a) _____
_____	b) _____
	c) _____
b) _____	a) _____
_____	b) _____
	c) _____
c) _____	a) _____
_____	b) _____
	c) _____

4) What personal qualities are important for a career in the field you have chosen? List 5 and explain why they are important.

CAREER FIELD: _____

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

5) What is the job outlook for your career field in the future?

6) What factors affect the job outlook in <u>your</u> career field? Be specific.

C. EDUCATION

1) What level of education is required for each position you listed for the next ten years? Why? Give details.

a) POSITION: _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

_____

b) POSITION: _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

_____

c) POSITION: _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

_____

d) POSITION: _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

_____

e) POSITION: _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

_____

2) Did the information you found indicate that it is important for your career, to continue your education beyond the Associate degree? Why? Give details.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3) What factors did you use to choose the colleges you listed on your Future Resume? List 5 factors and why each one is important to you.

a. _____

_____

_____

b. _____

_____

_____

c. _____

_____

_____

d. _____

_____

_____

e. _____

_____

_____

4) Why did you choose the degrees, majors, and minors you listed on your Future Resume?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. EXPERIENCE

1) Describe how the jobs you listed on your Future Resume would help develop the necessary background for moving toward your ten year career objective. In doing this, make sure you describe how the experience and skills developed on each job can help prepare you to move to the next job.

JOB #1: TITLE: _____

JOB #2: TITLE: _____

JOB #3: TITLE: _____

JOB #4: TITLE: _____

2) If in your research you found more than one job path to get to your career goal, why did you choose the one you listed? In answering, please provide examples of some of the other job paths you discovered and compare them with the one you chose.

3) For each of the positions listed for the next ten years provide the typical entry level salary, the average salary and the maximum salary you could earn in annual amounts.

JOB TITLE	SALARY		
	ENTRY	AVERAGE	MAXIMUM
a)			
b)			
c)			
d)			
e)			
f)			

4) What obstacles, if any, did you discover a person like yourself might face in pursuing your career? For example, did you find that a woman pursuing a career in a field that has been dominated by men is likely to face obstacles due to her sex? How could you deal with the obstacles you discovered? Give details.

F. SKILLS

1) For each of the jobs you listed for the next ten years list the skills which are necessary for each position. Also explain why each skill is important.

	Job Title	Skills	Reason skill is important
a)	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
b)	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
c)	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
d)	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
e)	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
f)	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____

G. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Please list the information resource materials used to complete your term project. Listings must be in standard bibliographic style. Include all books, journals, pamphlets, articles and other printed materials used.

Career Related Materials

Education Related Materials

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION AND YOUR CAREER

Deciding whether or not to continue your education after LaGuardia is a very important decision. It is crucial that your decision is based on a good understanding of:

a) the alternatives available to you for pursuing your education; and

b) the long term impact having or not having a college degree (Associate, Bachelor, graduate degree)has on your career.

An Associate degree is indeed an important step in pursuing your career. But is it enough? Even if it is the only educational requirement for "breaking into" your career field, will it be enough to allow you to advance in your field? Most often the answer to this question is no. Though having a Bachelors degree does not guarantee you a job, it is often one of the minimum requirements for getting a job in your career field and for advancement. In many fields graduate degrees are also required.

The starting salary that many companies offer is often affected by the degree one has attained. Depending on the field, someone with a Bachelors degree will often be offered a higher starting salary than someone with an Associates degree. Salary increases and promotions are also often affected by the degrees you have attained. In many Civil Service areas the degree you have will decide the occupational

and salary levels you are allowed to apply for. Needless to say, continuing your education is an important part of planning for your career growth.

Pursuing your education beyond your Associate degree not only helps you in meeting the requirements for a job but also in developing knowledge of your field and of areas which will help you in other aspects of your life. Though you may be an Accounting major and take mostly Accounting and Business courses, a course in Psychology will help you better understand the people with whom you live and work. Education should not be viewed as merely for the sake of a job. It is also intended to help you develop as an individual.

EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

An important role that a college education plays is to assist in the development of one's knowledge and skills. In today's fast-changing technological world it is crucial to not only understand the fundamentals of a field but to also be aware of the latest developments. As our society changes so does the need for new knowledge and skills. Many observers of our economy have noted that the issue is not that the new technolohy has replaced people's jobs but rather that it has created the need for people with new and different skills. At one time accountants could function very well with only the use of their knowledge of accounting concepts and an adding machine. Today, the ability to use

various computer programs is crucial to an accountant. In fact many colleges now offer specialized programs in computer science for accounting students.

No matter what the field, developing and updating your knowledge and skills is important. In most professions, continuing your education beyond the Associates level is one way to do so. In some fields it is the only way to do so. Make sure that you are familiar with the educational requirements for your area of interest, both for entering the field and for advancement.

THE COLLEGE DEGREE - A CREDENTIAL

Though the primary importance of a college education is in the development of knowledge and skills, the college degree is also an important credential.

Credentials are certificates awarded to a person to show that he or she has the knowledge and/or right to perform a certain function or to exercise authority in a given area. They are also a sign of status. Examples are a Teaching License, a Word Processing Certificate or a License to Practice Medicine.

College and graduate school degrees are also credentials. They indicate that the recipient of the degree has been educated and trained in a given area.

According to the last U.S. Census, only 19% of Americans have ever obtained any college education. This is a rather small proportion of our population. Having a degree thus makes you a part of this small but special group.

Well then, how does this all effect your career? Let's use an example to make a point. You are an employer who is looking to hire someone for a job in your company. You interview two people who have the same amount of job experience in the field in which you are hiring. Both are very pleasant and presentable but one has a college degree and the other doesn't. Which would you hire?

Although the person with the college degree might not always get the job, in situations like the one described above, often he or she does.

Today many fields require degrees for the exact same jobs which ten years ago did not require a degree. Why? Sometimes it is because a particular field has changed and now requires knowledge and skills that can only be developed in college. Other times it is because a particular profession wants to limit the number of people who can enter the field so the educational requirement is increased. Still other times it is because employers want to get the most for their dollars, so they look to hire the person who has the most experience and most education. (Of course sometimes people

with advanced degrees such as the PhD are viewed as "Over-Qualified" for certain job levels.)

The college degree as a credential is often one of the minimum requirements for applying for a job or for advancing. In many cases the degree doesn't even have to be in the field in which you will be working. It is a symbol, a sign of status that is valued in our society. It is often the key that opens many doors.

In gathering information about your career area, take a close look at the role that a college degree plays both for entry and for advancement. Is it important to have so that you can compete with others who are trying to get the same jobs? Don't wait till you are turned down for a job because you don't have a degree, to realize that you need one.

HOW MUCH EDUCATION IS ENOUGH

The decision whether to continue your education beyond the Associates Degree is an important one. For many this means going on for a Bachelors Degree. But in order to be successful in many fields, a Bachelors Degree may not be enough. Some may require a Masters degree, a Doctoral degree or a professional degree. The decision as to how far you must continue your education depends on the particular career you are pursuing, and your long term goals. Most professions have opportunities for people at all degree levels. The

question of course is what degree or degrees will help you get to the position in which you are interested for the future. It is important to research this information at this point in your career so that you can make the appropriate plans and avoid being disappointed later.

CHAPTER VI

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND YOUR CAREER

"I haven't heard of anybody who wants to stop living on account of cost."

Kin Hubbard

For most of us, achieving our life goals involves much more than making plans, studying and working hard. The realities of life force us to deal with things like financial expenses, personal crisis and the unknown future. Issues such as the cost of pursuing an education protecting ourselves and families in times of crisis, and planning for a secure future often influence the career paths we take.

In the following sections we will discuss some of the methods for coping with these issues. Though it is impossible to discuss every issue for every situation here, you should feel free to raise additional concerns that you may have at your next class meeting.

PROVIDING FOR LIFES EXPENSES

In the type of economy we live in, companies and organizations compensate people who work for them by paying them a salary. The amount of salary one is paid affects the lifestyle one can lead and how well living expenses are met. Given today's high cost of living, salary is rarely enough to cover all of life's expenses, especially in crisis situations. Fringe benefits are one of the ways that employers help employees in meeting their expenses and enjoying a more comfortable lifestyle.

Fringe benefits are forms of compensation that employers provide to employees besides the salaries they pay them. They are intended to a) help employees pay for many of their major expenses, and b) have leisure time for other activities. Though there are a wide variety of fringe benefits that an employer could provide, the following is a list of some of the most typical ones offered:

a) Paid holidays and vacations - are days or weeks that an employee is allowed to take off from work for leisure purposes without losing any salary;

b) Sick days - are days an employee is allowed to take off from work because of illness and still be paid;

c) Maternity leave - is the period of time that an employer allows a woman to take off from work because of childbirth, without the risk of loosing her job;

d) Medical plans - are insurance plans that an employer provides to pay for an employee's medical expenses. This can include payment for doctor's bill, hospital costs, medicines, dental and optical coverage, and lab fees. Often medical plans also pay for the medical expenses for an employee's family;

e) Tuition - aid benefit programs - (as discussed in the next section) tuition aid is an employee benefit where an employer agrees to pay the tuition for employees wishing to attend school;

f) Life insurance - is insurance that an employer provides to pay a sum of money to an employee's family in the event that the employee dies;

g) Retirement plans - are long term plans where an employer invests money in an insurance policy which will provide an income to employees when they retire.

Fringe benefits play an extremely important role in most people lives today. They are crucial for protection in times of crisis, planning for a secure future and easing the pressures of day to day living. If you were to calculate the amount of money necessary to pay for all of the expenses covered by the above benefits, it would add up to a significant amount. In view of this, fringe benefits are an important part of calculating the salary an employer might offer you. A position offering a high salary with poor fringe benefits may not really be worth more that one offering a lower salary with excellent fringe benefits.

PURSUING YOUR EDUCATION

The most typical problem that people face in pursuing their education is, how to pay for it? In a time when tuition rates in many schools have skyrocketed, this is a very real concern. Though the cost of pursuing your education should not be the primary reason you use to decide to continue or choose which school to attend, obviously it cannot be ignored. Before you make any decisions because of costs, let's take a look at some of the ways that you can pay for your education.

a. Financial Aid - For many of you, financial aid, in the form of government assistance such as TAP (Tuition Assistance Program), BEOG (Basic Education Opportunity Grants) and College Work Study, is a familiar method for paying for college expenses and sometimes earning a salary. In order to qualify for financial aid you must file the appropriate application, which can be obtained from the school to which you are applying. In most cases the key factor affecting whether or not you can receive financial aid is your family's income. If you do receive financial aid you do not have to pay back the government.

b. Student Loans - Established in order to assist students in paying for their educations, the student loan program allows you to borrow money from a bank, at a low interest rate that does not have to be paid back until after you graduate. In fact in most cases there is no interest charge on the loan until after you graduate or stop attending school. The repayment period usually depends on the amount of the loan, but can vary up to 13 years. You are allowed to take out more than one student loan, though there are limits as to how much you can borrow each year. The money you receive can be used for tuition, books and any other school related expenses. You can get more information on student loans in the Financial Aid Office or from your neighborhood bank.

c. Scholarships - Scholarships are financial awards that are provided by colleges, the government, private foundations, corporations, unions, interest groups and other organizations. Each group establishes the award to recognize the outstanding performance of a student. Some of the areas in which scholarships are awarded include academic performance, athletics, essay writing, music, dance performance, and commmunity service. In order to apply for a scholarship you must submit the appropriate application, and materials to the group sponsoring the award. The group then chooses the best candidate(s) to receive the scholarship. Scholarships do not have to be paid back. Most college bulletins list the scholarships that are available through their schools. There are also reference books in the library and the Career Resource Center which provide information on scholarships.

d. Attending School Part-Time While Working - There are many reasons for attending school part-time while working. For example you may want to begin working in your field and continue your education, or personal responsibilities and expenses may require you to earn a full-time income. Whatever the reasons, working while attending school is an excellent way of earning money to cover your personal expenses and pay for school. Many people feel they prefer working while attending school because it helps them apply what they are learning in the classroom which makes their educations richer.

The job you hold while attending school does not have to be in your career field. Many people prefer working jobs which have varied hours so that they can attend school during the day. For example, working the night shift at United Parcel Service or as a waiter or waitress on weekends.

Working while attending school can have other benefits such as Tuition - Aid Benefit Programs.

e. Tuition - Aid Benefit Programs - Today one of the benefits that many companies and organizations offer their employees is tuition aid. Sometimes called tuition reimbursement, tuition aid is an employee benefit where an employer agrees to pay the tuition for employees wishing to attend school. This is not a loan which must be repaid. It is a form of financial assistance that employers provide to their employees. Though tuition-aid benefit programs do not have family income requirements that must be met as in the case of government financial aid programs, there usually are some prerequisites for receiving the benefit. For example

1. Tuition aid may only be available to full-time employees, though some companies do provide aid for part-time workers;

2. You may be eligible for aid only after you have been employed by the company for a certain amount of time, usually 6 months to a year;

3. Aid may only be provided for job related courses, undergraduate courses or graduate courses, or credit bearing courses;

4. There may be a minimum grade requirement that you must receive in a course before the employer will pay the tuition.

5. Some employers will only pay for part of the tuition;

6. There may be a course or credit limit per semester that the employer will pay for;

7. Some employers pay tuition before the course begins while others will pay for it after you complete the course; and

8. Often employers also pay for registration fees, lab fees, and book costs.

Tuition-aid benefit programs are an excellent way to pay for college expenses. In deciding what job you might take while attending school, it is an important benefit to look for. There are reference books such as A Guide to Tuition-Aid Benefit Programs in the New York Area (written by the College of New Rochelle and the College Board, published by The College Entrance Examination Board, New York, 1982) which list many of the companies which offer tuition-aid benefit programs and the prerequisites for receiving the benefit. Reference books such as this one can be found in the library and in the Career Resource Center. You can also contact the personnel department of a company to inquire if they offer tuition aid.

All of the above methods are available to you to help pay for your education. As you can see costs need not be a major factor in preventing you from continuing your education. Choose any or all of the above methods which best address your particular situation.

OBSTACLES OF LIFE

The above section provided information on dealing with many of the personal expenses you will encounter in the future. Personal expenses are only one of the obstacles you will face in pursuing your career and life goals. Rather than perceiving obstacles in your life as problems, it is useful to see them as puzzles to be solved. Don't be afraid to use your creativity in approaching life's questions. A creative mind can always find an answer.

CHAPTER VII

LOOKING AHEAD

The seminar is now coming to an end. You have spent a great deal of time learning how to research and gathering information on your career field. Needless to say, it's been a lot of work. For many of you, the work has not yet ended. You're probably putting the finishing touches on your Future Resume and completing your Research Sheets right now!

A MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Though the seminar is ending, in many ways, the work is just beginning. Planning a life is a process that never ends. The seminar was an attempt to teach you a method to help you make future plans. The Future Resume and the Research Sheets required you to take a closer look at how you make career plans. The reasons why you choose to do something are as important as what you choose to do.

The information you gathered for your term project allowed you to map out a possible path to achieve your ten year career goal. As was mentioned in earlier chapters there are many paths to any career goal. Your project has created only one. Will you follow it? Some of you might, while others may go in a completely different direction. But no matter which way you go, the process for planning your path never changes. Decisions and plans that will affect your whole life are too important to just be made "off the top of your head." You should always use reliable information which you have gathered and studied.

Plans will often change, sometimes because you'll change them and other times because someone or something else will. Change is a part of life. Don't be frightened by it. Instead pick yourself up and find out why the changes occured. How do they affect your life? What can you do about them? Life requires that you question it. Do not just blindly accept things or act without knowing. Use the knowledge you have and gather the information you need to plan your steps.

THE NEXT STEP

Gathering information to make plans is only part of the game. Plans alone will not get you anywhere. The steps you take based on the information you gather will determine your successes.

What steps can you now take based on the information you gathered for your term project? Well, first of all you may feel that you need more information about a particular area. By all means, go out and find it! Just because you've finished (or about to finish) your term project does not mean you know everything there is to know about your future.

Secondly, begin writing to the college you've research to get applications and information. Getting information through the mail takes time. Don't wait until the last minute. LaGuardia often sponsors programs in the Main Lobby where colleges come to share information about their programs. Ask one of your counselors when the next one is being held.

Next, take a careful look at the information you've gathered. Does it tell you anything about what courses might be helpful for you to take? Are there any skills you should start developing? If there are, speak to your advisor and coordinator about them. Discuss why you feel they would be helpful to your career. They may be able to give you more suggestions.

Your research may have also given you some ideas on what internships might be helpful for you to take next. The job path you planned for your term project has to start somewhere. Why not with your internships!

For many of you, the information you've gathered will help you continue in your already decided field. For others, you may have investigated only one of the fields in which you are interested. Try using the same process to research the other fields you are considering.

But what if the information you found has now discouraged you from pursuing a career in a particular field. Before you change your plans, take a careful look at your research. See if there are areas which you should investigate a bit more. Ask yourself, why are you discouraged? Is it because the path you have found seems too difficult or too long? Is the work you would be doing different then what you expected it would be? Are you basing your feelings on what one of your interviewees said to you? Don't be quick to change your plans. Consider the reasons why you feel discouraged. Often the only way to really know what to do next is to do a little more research. You might also try speaking with your coop coordinator. Also, try discussing your feelings with other students. People change plans all the time. The important thing is not to be so discouraged that you just give up. In order to grow you have to be able to deal with change. Realizing now, that a field may not be right for you means that you still have the future to change it.

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